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Programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

United Nations common system

Administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations contained in the report of the International Civil Service Commission for 2004

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly*

Summary

Pursuant to rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the present statement is submitted detailing the administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission on the common system, in particular their implications on the programme budget of the United Nations for the biennium 2004-2005. Recommendations and decisions of the Commission giving rise to requirements under the regular budget for the current biennium will be taken into consideration when computing the first performance report for the biennium 2004-2005.

* The present statement of implications could only be produced subsequent to the receipt of the subject report of the International Civil Service Commission.

04-54733 (E) 251004

I. Introduction

1. The thirtieth annual report of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC)[1] contains a number of decisions and recommendations with financial implications for the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 related to the following issues (the paragraph numbers refer to the ICSC report):

(a) Conditions of service of staff in the Professional and higher categories: base/floor salary scale and staff assessment scale (paras. 220-235);

(b) Conditions of service applicable to both categories of staff:

(i) Hazard pay for locally recruited staff (paras. 138-147);

(ii) Education grant (paras. 148-167).

II. Conditions of service of staff in the Professional and higher categories: base/floor salary scale

2. The General Assembly, in section I.H of its resolution 44/198 of 21 December 1989, established a floor net salary scale for staff in the Professional and higher categories by reference to the corresponding net salary levels of officials in comparable positions serving in the base city of the comparator civil service (the federal civil service of the United States of America). The base/floor salary scale was part of an integrated package of measures in which negative classes of post adjustment were eliminated.

3. The General Schedule salary scale for the United States federal civil service in Washington, D.C., the current comparator, increased by 2.7 per cent on a gross basis, as from 1 January 2004. It should be recalled that, in 2004, the United Nations base/floor salary scale has been maintained at its 2003 level since it was slightly higher than the 2003 General Schedule of the comparator federal civil service. However, the 2004 General Schedule increase, combined with the effect of tax changes, resulted in GS-13/GS-14 salary levels that were 1.88 per cent higher than the current base/floor salary scale. In accordance with the approved procedures and past practices, this would call for an upward adjustment of the common system salary scale by 1.88 per cent. The Commission, in its 2004 annual report,[1] decided to recommend to the General Assembly an upward adjustment of the current base/floor salary scale for staff in the Professional and higher categories by 1.88 per cent, with effect from 1 January 2005. The increase of 1.88 per cent for the year 2005 in the base/floor salary scale would be implemented through the standard method of consolidating post adjustment multiplier points on a no-loss/no-gain basis.

4. The financial implications resulting from the above-mentioned adjustment of the base/floor salary scale for the United Nations and other participating organizations of the common system have been calculated by ICSC in the amount of $2,008,900, broken down as follows:

(a) For duty stations with low post adjustment that would otherwise fall below the level of the new base/floor: $264,700;

(b) In respect of mobility/hardship allowance: $1,426,000;

(c) In respect of the scale of separation payments: $318,200.

5. The financial implications of the above recommendation for the United Nations programme budget in the year 2005 have been estimated at $354,600, including: (i) an increase in the level of mobility and hardship allowance ($172,500); and (ii) an increase in the level of separation payments ($182,100). No financial implications for the programme budget are anticipated with respect to the adjustments referred to in paragraph 4 (a) above.

6. In the context of the review of the revised base/floor scale adjustment, the Commission noted that the issue of the adjustment of the staff assessment rates to address imbalances in the Tax Equalization Fund had been discussed with the United Nations Secretariat and that no adjustment had been requested at that time. Accordingly, no change in the rates of staff assessment would be required in 2005.

III. Conditions of service applicable to both categories of staff

A. Hazard pay for locally-recruited staff

7. Following careful consideration of General Assembly resolution 58/251 of 23 December 2003, the Commission expressed its agreement with the Assembly's proposal for a smaller increase in the level of hazard pay for locally recruited staff. The Commission decided that the level of hazard pay granted to locally recruited staff should be increased from 20 per cent to 25 per cent of the midpoint of the local salary scale and that the decision was to be implemented with effect from 1 June 2004.

8. The total annual financial implications of that decision for the United Nations and other participating organizations of the common system have been estimated at $1,800,000.

9. The annual financial implications for the United Nations programme budget have been estimated at $599,000. Based on a retroactive payment of the entitlement from 1 June 2004, the total financial implications for the United Nations programme budget in the biennium 2004-2005 are estimated at $948,100.

B. Education grant

10. Based on the methodology approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/216, section III.A, the Commission decided to recommend to the Assembly that:

(a) The level of maximum admissible expenses and the maximum grant for Austria (euro), Belgium (euro), Denmark (euro), France (euro), Germany (euro), Ireland (euro), Italy (euro), Japan (yen), the Netherlands (euro), Spain (euro), Sweden (euro), Switzerland (Swiss franc), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (pound sterling), the United States of America (United States dollar) and the United States dollar outside the United States of America, should be set as shown in annex IV, table 1, of its annual report;[1]

(b) The maximum amount of admissible expenses and the maximum grant for Finland and Norway should remain at the current levels;

(c) The flat rates for boarding to be taken into account within the maximum admissible educational expenses and the additional amounts for reimbursement of boarding costs over and above the maximum grant payable to staff members at designated duty stations should be revised as shown in annex IV, table 2, of its annual report;[1]

(d) The amount of the special education grant for each disabled child should be equal to 100 per cent of the revised amounts of the maximum allowable expenses for the regular grant;

(e) Special measures should be maintained for China, Indonesia, Romania and the Russian Federation, which would allow organizations to reimburse 75 per cent of actual expenses up to and not exceeding the level of maximum admissible expenses in force for the United States dollar area in the United States of America;

(f) All the above measures should be applicable as from the school year in progress on 1 January 2005.

11. The annual financial implications of the Commission's recommendation for organizations of the United Nations common system have been estimated at $2,200,000.

12. The annual financial implications of the recommendation for the United Nations programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 have been estimated at $965,000.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

13. The financial implications for the United Nations programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 resulting from decisions and recommendations of ICSC are summarized below as follows:

	(In United States dollars)
Remuneration of staff in the Professional and higher categories[a]	
Mobility/hardship allowances	172 500
Separation payments	182 100
Conditions of service applicable to both categories of eligible staff[b]	
Hazard pay (local staff)	
June 2004-December 2005 (19 months)	948 100
Education grant	965 000
Total	**2 267 700**

[a] See para. 5 above.
[b] See paras. 9 and 12 above.

14. Accordingly, the related requirements under the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 resulting from the recommendations and decisions of ICSC have been estimated to be in the order of $2,267,700, net of staff assessment. Those requirements will be taken into consideration when computing the first performance report for the biennium 2004-2005 in accordance with existing practice.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 30* (A/59/30).

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General Assembly

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Fifty-ninth session
Agenda item 113
Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Letter dated 11 October 2004 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly

1. At present, 13 Member States are in arrears under the terms of Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations, which states as follows:

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years. The General Assembly may, nevertheless, permit such a Member to vote if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member."

2. The minimum payments necessary to reduce the amounts owed by those Member States on their contributions so that they remain below the gross amount assessed for the preceding two full years (2002 and 2003) are as follows:

Member State	*Minimum payment (United States dollars)*
Central African Republic	319 948.00[a]
Chad	9 333.00
Comoros	744 450.00[a]
Georgia	5 968 712.49[a]
Guinea-Bissau	459 550.00[a]
Iraq	14 519 577.00[a]
Liberia	1 110 215.00[a]
Malawi	6 715.00
Niger	338 087.69[a]
Republic of Moldova	1 299 635.00[a]
Sao Tome and Principe	562 555.00[a]
Somalia	990 955.00[a]
Tajikistan	1 252 174.00[a]

[a] In its resolution 59/1 of 11 October 2004, the General Assembly decided that the Central African Republic, Comoros, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Liberia, the Niger, the Republic of Moldova, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia and Tajikistan should be permitted to vote in the Assembly until 30 June 2005.

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Fifty-ninth session
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Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Letter dated 27 October 2004 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly

Further to my letter dated 11 October 2004 (A/59/430), I have the honour to inform you that Malawi has made the payment necessary to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**
Secretary-General

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Fifty-ninth session
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The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The present report contains replies received from Member States in response to the Secretary-General's note verbale dated 12 April 2004, concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions 58/22, entitled "Jerusalem", and 58/23, entitled "The Syrian Golan", both of 3 December 2003.

* The present report is being submitted on 12 October 2004 in order to include as much updated information as possible.

04-55012 (E) 281004

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 58/22 and 58/23, both of 3 December 2003. In its resolution 58/22, the Assembly deplored the transfer by some States of their diplomatic missions to Jerusalem in violation of Security Council resolution 478 (1980), and called once more upon those States to abide by the provisions of the relevant United Nations resolutions, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations. In its resolution 58/23, which deals with Israeli policies in the Syrian territory occupied by Israel since 1967, the Assembly demanded once more that Israel withdraw from all the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967 in implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

2. In order to fulfil his reporting responsibility under Assembly resolutions 58/22 and 58/23, on 12 April 2004 the Secretary-General addressed notes verbales to the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations and to the Permanent Representatives of other Member States, requesting them to inform him of any steps that their Governments had taken or envisaged taking in regard to the implementation of the relevant provisions of those resolutions. As at 30 September 2004, replies had been received from Estonia, Israel, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the Syrian Arab Republic. Those replies are reproduced in section II of the present report.

II. Replies received from Member States

Estonia

[Original: English]

1. Estonia has no diplomatic representation in Israel and is therefore not affected by General Assembly resolution 58/22 concerning diplomatic missions to Jerusalem.

2. Concerning Assembly resolution 58/23 on the Syrian Golan, we can assure you that Estonia does everything in its capacity to ensure the resumption of the peace process and implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

Israel

[Original: English]

1. As the Secretary-General is aware, Israel voted against these resolutions, and against similar resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at previous sessions. In the light of the urgent need to bring an end to all acts of violence and terrorism in the region and to further the agreed negotiation process, Israel wishes to put on record, once again, its position on this matter.

2. Israel views the aforementioned General Assembly resolutions as unbalanced documents that threaten to prejudge the outcome of the Middle East peace process. The one-sided approach reflected in these resolutions undermines a fundamental principle of the peace process, according to which the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the region is possible only through direct bilateral negotiations.

3. The time to put an end to such biased United Nations resolutions is long overdue, requiring immediate and serious consideration by the Secretary-General. These one-sided resolutions are not only out of touch with reality and anachronistic, they are counterproductive to the very spirit of peace. Rather than promoting a vision which recognizes the rights and obligations of both sides, as articulated in the Road Map, these resolutions obscure the efforts of the parties to achieve a negotiated outcome, at a moment when Prime Minister Sharon's courageous disengagement plan has opened a critical window of opportunity in the peace process.

Netherlands

[Original: English]

The Netherlands is in compliance with Security Council resolution 478 (1980). Furthermore, the Netherlands, through the European Union and elsewhere, actively participates in and encourages international efforts, such as those undertaken by the Quartet for the Middle East, aimed at reaching a lasting peace in the region.

Switzerland

[Original: French]

The Permanent Mission of Switzerland informs the Secretariat that Switzerland has no specific contribution to make in this regard.

Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]

1. The Syrian Arab Republic, which supported General Assembly resolution 58/23, entitled "The Syrian Golan", affirms once again the absolute need for Israel to end the occupation of the Syrian Golan, to comply with Security Council resolution 497 (1981) and to commit itself to implementing Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), with a view to achieving a just and comprehensive peace.

2. The Syrian Arab Republic, which believes that a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East can be brought about only through a just and comprehensive peaceful settlement, was party to the universality of Arab States that adopted the Arab peace initiative at the Beirut Summit in 2002. It has also firmly established its strategic choice, based on the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace, through the appeal of its President for a resumption of the peace talks from the point where they had left off, with a view to building on the progress that had been made in the peace negotiations that followed the Madrid Conference in 1991.

3. The General Assembly, in its resolution 58/23, declared Israel's decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan null and void and without any validity whatsoever, and called upon Israel to rescind that decision. Israel should also comply with the General Assembly resolutions concerning the Syrian Golan, including resolution 58/100 of 9 December 2003, in particular paragraphs 2 to 5 thereof, in which the Assembly called upon Israel to

desist from changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan.

4. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic sees in the decision taken by the Government of Israel on 31 December 2003 to increase the number of its settlements and expand settlement activity in the occupied Golan an indication of Israeli intentions to hold the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly in contempt, including General Assembly resolution 58/98 of 9 December 2003, in which the Assembly reiterated its demand for the complete cessation of all Israeli settlement activities. The Syrian Arab Republic also views the despotic Israeli decision as wrecking the peace process and further entrenching the occupation, rather than ending it in accordance with the principle of land for peace.

5. The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution 58/22, entitled "Jerusalem", and calls upon the international community to exert pressure on Israel to end its occupation of the Arab territories occupied by it in 1967, including Jerusalem, and to comply with Security Council resolution 478 (1980), in which the Council decided not to recognize the "basic law" on Jerusalem enacted by Israel and affirmed that Israel's decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on Al-Quds al-Sharif was illegal and consequently null and void and totally lacking in validity.

6. Israel's decision to proceed with the construction of the separation wall within Palestinian territory is a challenge to the will of the international community, expressed in General Assembly resolution ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, in which the Assembly demanded that Israel stop and reverse the construction of the wall. The Syrian Arab Republic calls upon all States to comply fully with General Assembly resolution 58/22, in particular its third preambular paragraph, which refers to Security Council resolution 478 (1980), in which the Council called upon those States that had established diplomatic missions at Jerusalem to withdraw such missions from the Holy City and to comply with the provisions of the resolution.